

His Majesties DECLARATION

T O

All His loving SUBJECTS,

December 26. 1662.

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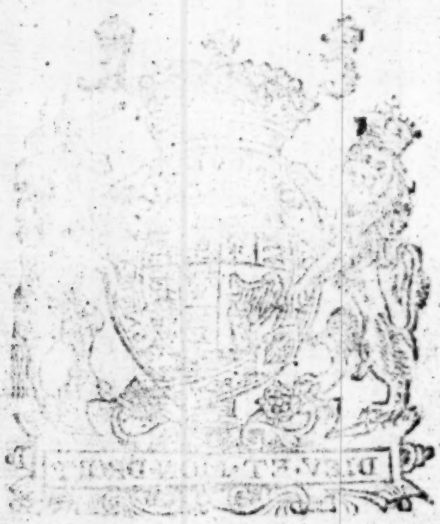
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most Excellent Maiesty, 1662.

CUM PRIVILEGIO.

His Majesty's
DECLARATION

AND

IN



1794

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By Appointment to His Majesty King George the Third.

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His Majesties DECLARATION

T O

All His loving SUBJECTS,

December 26. 1662.

CHARLES R.



S it hath pleased Almighty God so wonderfully to restore Us to the Throne of Our Ancestors, and Our Subjects, to happy Peace and Tranquillity, without the least Bloudshed by the Military Sword; so having still earnestly wished that both might be secured and maintained with the least effusion possible of the same by the Sword of Justice, as desiring much rather to cure the ill Intentions of the Disaffected by Our Clemency, then to punish the Effects of them by Rigour of Law:

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We cannot but expresse Our great grief and trouble, That the Unpardonable, as well as Incurable Malignity of some should have carried them anew to such Traiterous practices against Our Person and Government, as have necessitated Us to make fresh Examples by the death of any more of Our Subjects. But as the Publickness of their Tryal in the ordinary course of Law, hath by their Conviction sufficiently satisfied the world of the Enormity of their Crimes, so We have* thought fit at the same time that We are forced to punish, to endeavour as much as in Us lieth, the preventing all occasions of the like for the future by this Declaration; Wherein Our principal aim is, to apply proper Antidotes to all those Venemous Insinuations, by which (as We are certainly informed) some of Our Subjects of Inveterate and Unalterable ill Principles, do daily endeavour to poison the affections of Our good People, by misleading their Understandings, and that principally by Four sorts of most false and malicious Scandals, which We do look upon as the Grounds of those Traiterous Attempts.

The First, by suggesting unto them, That having attained Our ends in re-establishing Our Regal Authority, and gaining the Power into Our own hands by a specious Condescension to a
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general Act of Indempnity, We intend nothing less then the Observation of it; but on the contrary by degrees to subject the Persons and Estates of all such who stood in need of that Law to future revenge, and to give them up to the spoil of those, who had lost their Fortunes in Our Service.

Secondly, That upon pretence of Plots and practices against Us, We intend to introduce a Military way of Government in this Kingdom.

Thirdly, That having made use of such Solemn Promises from Breda, and in several Declarations since, of ease and liberty to tender Consciences, instead of performing any part of them, We have added streighter fetters then ever, and new rocks of scandal to the scrupulous, by the Act of Uniformity.

Fourthly and lastly, We finde it as artificially as maliciously divulged throughout the whole Kingdom, That at the same time We deny a fitting liberty to those other Sects of our Subjects, whose Consciences will not allow them to conform to the Religion established by Law; We are highly indulgent to Papists, not only in exempting them from the penalties of the Law, but even to such a degree of Countenance and Encouragement, as may even endanger the Protestant Religion.

Upon occasion of all which wicked and malicious suggestions, although We are confi-

dent that the innate Loyalty and good Affections of the generality of Our People, strengthened by a due sense of the late Calamities brought upon them by the same Arts, will hinder seeds of so detestable a nature from taking root, and bringing forth the fruits aimed at by the sowers of them: Yet We think that in Our Fatherly care to prevent any misleading of those, who are so dear to Us, We owe unto them and to Our selves this Publication of Our steadfast Resolutions in all these particulars.

As to the first Point, concerning the Act of Indemnity; Certainly there can be no greater evidence, that the passing it proceeded from the Clemency of Our Nature, as well as from the present Conjuncture of that Parliament wherein it was first framed, then that We have been pleased to make it Our especial care to have it confirmed by a New Act in this, a Parliament composed of Members so full of Affections to Our Person, and of Zeal for the Publique good, as We could never have cause to apprehend their Exact- ing from Us a Confirmation of any thing that had been before Extorted, or had at present been judged by Us prejudicial to either; and therefore as We not only consented unto, but most earnestly desired the passing that Act at first, and confirming it since, as being no less conform-

conformable to Our nature, then conducive to a happy Settlement : so We do hereby most solemnly renew unto all Our Subjects concerned in it, this Engagement , on the Word of a King, That it shall never be in the power of any Person or Interest whatsoever, to make Us decline from the Religious Observance of it ; it having been always a constant Profession of Ours, That We do and shall ever think Our Royal Dignity and Greatness much more happily, and securely founded on Our own Clemency and Our Subjects Loves, then in their Fears, and Our Power.

Which most sincere Profession of Ours may suffice also to expose the wickedness and fallshood of the other malice concerning the design of introducing a way of Government by Military power.

It is true, that We should not think We discharged rightly what We owe to the Publique Peace, and to the Freedom and Security of Parliaments, as well as to the Safety of Our Person, if whilst We daily discover such multitudes of distempered Minds, and such dangerous Practices issuing from them , We should for want of sufficient Guards put it in the power of those Rebellious Spirits to undertake probably at any time, what they have at several times so madly attempted for the
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ruine and destruction of us all. Of which certainly, besides the present occasion of new Precaution as well as new Severity, We suppose all our good Subjects need not a livelier nor more moving instance, than what their memories can furnish them with, from the desperate undertaking of *Venner* and his Crew, which (as mad as it was) We leave to all the world to judge, of how dangerous a Consequence it might have been, without that little strength remaining of these Forces, which (to give Our People a testimony of Our founding all Our security rather in their Affections than in any military Power) We had so frankly disbanded, and which afterwards by advice of Our Council, meerly upon motives of the Publique Safety, We consented to increase to that moderate Proportion, which was indeed absolutely necessary, and hath since been sufficiently proved to be so, by the security which We owe to them from the late dangerous practices.

But the reasons of such Precautions once ceasing, We are very sure, that what Guards soever may be found necessary for Us to continue, as in former times, for the Dignity and Honour of Our Crown, the sole Strength and Security We shall ever confide in, shall be the Hearts and Affections of Our subjects, endeared and confirmed to Us by Our Gra-
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cious and steady manner of Government, according to the ancient known Laws of the Land; there being not any one of Our Subjects, who doth more from his heart abhor, then We Our Selves, all sort of Military and Arbitrary Rule.

As for the Third concerning the Non-performance of Our Promises, We remember well the very words of those from *Breda*:

Viz. We do Declare a Liberty to Tender Consciences, and that no man shall be disquieted or called in question for differences of Opinion in matters of Religion, which do not disturb the Peace of the Kingdom; and that We shall be ready to consent to such an Act of Parliament, as upon mature deliberation shall be offered to Us for the full granting that Indulgence.

We remember well the Confirmations We have made of them since upon several occasions in Parliament; and as all these things are still fresh in Our memory, so are We still firm in the resolution of performing them to the full. But it must not be wondred at, (since that Parliament, to which those Promises were made in relation to an Act, never thought fit to offer Us any to that purpose) that being so zealous as We are (& by the grace of God shall ever be) for the maintenance of the true Protestant Religion, finding it so shaken (not to say overthrowen) as We did,

What we owe to the Past of Our

WVe should give its establishment the precedence before matters of Indulgence to Dissenters from it. But that once done, (as VVe hope it is sufficiently by the Bill of Uniformity) WVe are glad to lay hold on this occasion to renew unto all Our Subjects concerned in those Promises of Indulgence by a true tenderness of Conscience, this assurance:

That as in the first place WVe have been Zealous to settle the Uniformity of the Church of *England*, in Discipline, Ceremony and Government, and shall ever constantly maintain it:

So as for what concerns the Penalties upon those who (living peaceably) do not conform thereunto through scruple and tenderness of misguided Conscience, but modestly and without scandal perform their devotions in their own way, WVe shall make it Our special Care so far forth as in Us lies, without invading the Freedom of Parliament, to incline their Wisdom at this next approaching Sessions, to concur with Us in the making some such Act for that purpose, as may enable Us to exercise with a more universal Satisfaction, that Power of Dispensing, which WVe conceive to be inherent in Us. Nor can WVe doubt of their (cheerful cooperating with Us in a thing wherein WVe do conceive Our selves so far engaged, both in Honour, and in what WVe owe to the Peace of Our
Domi-

Dominions, which We profess we can never think secure, whilst there shall be a colour left to the malicious and disaffected to inflame the minds of so many multitudes upon the score of Conscience, with despair of their obtaining any effect of Our Promises for their Ease.

In the last place, as to that most pernicious and injurious Scandal, so artificially spread and fomented, of Our Favour to Papists; as it is but a repetition of the same detestable Arts, by which all the late calamities have been brought upon this Kingdom in the time of our Royal Father of Blessed Memory; (who, though the most Pious and Zealous Protestant that ever Reigned in this Nation, could never wash off the stains cast upon him by that malice, but by his Martyrdom.) We conceive all Our Subjects should be sufficiently prepared against that poison by memory of those disasters; especially since nothing is more evident, than that the wicked Authors of this Scandal are such as seek to involve all good Protestants under the odious name of Papists, or Popishly affected. Yet we cannot but say upon this occasion, that Our Education, and course of Life in the true Protestant Religion hath been such, and Our Constancy in the Profession of it so eminent in Our most desperate Condition abroad among Roman Catholick

Catholick Princes, when as the appearance of
 receding from it had been the likeliest way in
 all humane forecast, to have procured Us
 the most powerful Assistances of Our
 Re-establishment, that should any of Our
 Subjects give but the least admission of that
 scandal into their beliefs, VVe should look
 upon it as the most unpardonable offence
 that they can be guilty of towards Us. 'Tis
 true, that as VVe shall alwaies according to
 Justice retain, so We think it may become Us
 to avow to the VVorld a due sense We
 have of the greatest part of Our Roman Ca-
 tholick Subjects of this Kingdom, having de-
 served well from Our Royal Father of Bles-
 sed Memory, and from Us, and even from
 the Protestant Religion it self, in adhering to
 Us with their Lives and Fortunes for the
 maintenance of Our Crown in the Religion
 established, against those who under the name
 of zealous Protestants, imployed both Fire
 and Sword to overthrow them both. VVe
 shall with as much freedom profess unto the
 world, that it is not in Our Intention to ex-
 clude Our Roman Catholick Subjects, who
 have so demeaned themselves, from all share in
 the benefit of such an Act, as in pursuance of
 Our Promises, the wisdom of Our Parlia-
 ment shall think fit to offer unto Us for the
 ease of tender Consciences. It might appear

no less then Injustice, that those who deserved well, and continued to do so, should be denied some part of that mercy, which We have obliged Our Self to afford to ten times the number of such who have not done so. Besides, such are the Capital Laws in force against them, as though justified in their rigour by the times wherein they were made, We profess it would be grievous unto Us to consent to the Execution of them, by putting any of Our Subjects to death for their Opinions in matter of Religion only. But at the same time that We Declare Our little liking of those Sanguinary ones, & Our gracious Intentions already expressed to such of Our Roman Catholick Subjects as shall live peaceably, modestly, and without scandal; We would have them all know, that if for doing what their Duties and Loyalties obliged them to, or from Our acknowledgement of their well-deserving, they shall have the presumption to hope for a Toleration of their Profession, or a taking away either those marks of distinction, or of Our Displeasure, which in a well-governed Kingdom ought always to be set upon Dissenters from the Religion of the State, or to obtain the least Remission in the Strictness of those Laws, which either are, or shall be made to hinder the spreading of their Doctrine, to the prejudice of the true Protestant

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Religion;

Religion; or that upon Our expressing (ac-
 cording to Christian Charity) Our dislike of
 Bloodshed for Religion only; Priests shall
 take the boldness to appear and avow them-
 selves to the offence and scandal of good Pro-
 testants, and of the Laws in force against them;
 they shall quickly find; We know as well
 to be severe, when Wisdom requires, as In-
 dulgent when Charity and sense of Merit
 challenge it from Us. With this We have thought fit to arm
 Our good Subjects minds against the pra-
 ctices of Our ill ones, by a true knowledge of
 Our own, of which now rightly persuaded,
 We make no question, but that who-
 ever they be from whom they can derive the
 spreading or fomenting of any of those wicked
 suggestions, they will look upon them with
 detestation, as the most dangerous Enemies
 of our Crown, and of the Peace and Happi-
 nesses of the Nation; And that what We
 have here published, will happily prepare
 them all to a cheerful expectation of the ap-
 proaching Sessions of Parliament, an Assem-
 bly so eminent in their Loyalty, and their
 Zeal for the Peace and Prosperity of our
 Kingdoms; that having already made those
 happy Settlements for the maintenance of the
 Religion established, and of our just Rights,
 their full concurrence with Us, can no way
 be

be doubted in the performance of all Our Promises, and to the effecting all those Gracious Intentions which (God knows) Our heart is full of, for the Plenty, Prosperity, and universal satisfaction of the Nation.

In order to which, although it be foreign to the main scope of this Our Declaration, which is principally to prevent the mischiefs aimed at by the scandals therein mentioned, and that wherein VVe reserve the enlargement of Our self till the opening of the next Sessions of Parliament, yet VVe cannot forbear hinting heresunto Our good Subjects Four particulars, wherein VVe think to give them the most important marks of Our Care. First, *In punishing by severe Laws that licentiousness and impiety, which since the dissolution of Government, VVe find to Our great grief, hath overspread the Nation.* Secondly, *As well by Sumptuary Laws, as by Our own Example of Frugality, to restrain the excess in mens expences, which is grown so general and so exorbitant, beyond all bounds, either of their qualities or fortunes.* Thirdly, *So to perfect what VVe have already industriously begun in the retrenching of all Our own ordinary and extraordinary Charges in Navy, Garrisons, Household, and all their dependants, as to bring them within the compass of Our settled Revenue, that thereby Our Subjects may have little cause to apprehend Our frequent pressing them*

theſe ſeveral Affluences. And laſtly, ſo to improve the good Conſequences of theſe Three particulars to the advancement of Trade, that all Our Subjects finding (as well as other Nations envying) the advantage this hath of them in that prime foundation of Plenty, they may all with minds happily compoſed by Our Clemency and Indulgence (inſtead of taking up thoughts of deſerting their Profeſſions, or Tranſplanting) apply themſelves comfortably, and with redoubled induſtry to their ſeveral Vocations, in ſuch manner as the private Interſt of every one in particular may encourage him to contribute chearfully to the general Proſperity.

Given at Our Court at Whitehall, this Twen-
ty ſixth day of December, in the Four-
teenth year of Our Reign.

LONDON,

Printed by John Bill and Chriſtopher Barker,
Printers to the **KINGS** moſt
Excellent Maieſty; 1662.